

REMARKS

Claims 3-27 are pending in this application, of which Claims 3, 5, 7-9 and 15 have been amended. Claims 1-2 are canceled and Claims 10-14 and 16-27 are withdrawn from consideration. No new claims have been added. It is respectfully submitted that no new matter is entered.

The present invention is to a dial module having a dial having a design part, a sheet-shaped light source for illuminating the design part, and a flexible printed circuit fixed to a back surface of the light source. The dial is formed directly on a front surface of the light source. In another embodiment, a dial module has a sheet-shaped dial having a design part on a front surface of the dial, and a sheet-shaped light source fixed to a back surface of the dial for illuminating the design part. The light source is provided with a flexible printed circuit formed directly on a back surface of the light source. In still another embodiment a dial module has a sheet-shaped light source and a dial having a design part formed directly on a front surface of the light source, while a flexible printed circuit is formed directly on a back surface of the light source.

In the Office Action of July 16, 2007, Claims 3-8 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Salmon et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,406,303).

The Office Action alleges that Salmon et al. teaches a dial module having a sheet shaped dial (30) with a design part (46, 48, 50 and 52) on the front face, a sheet-shaped light source (26) fixed to the back surface of the dial, a flexible printed circuit board (24) fixed to the back surface of the light source, a terminal part (138) for attaching an additional component thereto (motors 22), and the dial, light source, and circuit board are substantially the same shape.

In the "Response to Arguments" portion of the Office Action, it states that the support (28) is part of the dial layer (30) (for providing the dial a more rigid structure) and holes (42) expose the dial(s) to the light source. Therefore the sheet shaped light source (26) is fixed to the back of the surface of the sheet shaped dial. Also, it is stated that the flexible printed circuit board (24) is fixed on the back surface of the sheet shaped light source (26) as shown in FIGS. 2-4.

In the Office Action the Examiner refers to FIGS. 2-4 and 6 of Salmon et al. in the present rejection. It is respectfully submitted that in FIGS. 2-4 and 6 the alleged sheet-shaped light source (26), the alleged flexible printed circuit (24) and the alleged dial (30) are clearly separate sheets which are joined together with an adhesive.

In the present invention certain embodiments are not separate sheets as it is taught that the dial (2) and the flexible printed circuit (4) can be formed directly on the sheet shaped light source (3), as shown in FIG. 10I.

Claims 3, 7 and 8 have been amended to more clearly define the claimed invention, so as to distinguish over Salmon et al., which has the above-described separate sheets.

In the Office Action of July 16, 2007, Claim 9 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Salmon et al. in view of Garay et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,183,099).

It is respectfully submitted that Garay et al. does not cure the deficiencies in the disclosure of Salmon et al. discussed above.

In the Office Action of July 16, 2007, Claim 15 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Salmon et al. in view of Kumazawa et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,333,697).

U.S. Patent Application Serial No. 10/528,448
Preliminary Amendment

The Office Action alleges that Salmon et al. teaches the basic invention described above, and further alleges that Kumazawa et al. teaches a frame board (60) in front of a dial (30), front glass (142) in front of the frame board, and a casing (10) arranged in the rear of the dial for fixing the dial between the frame board and casing (FIG. 3).

It is respectfully submitted that Kumazawa et al. does not cure the deficiencies in the disclosure of Salmon et al. discussed above.

In view of the aforementioned amendments and accompanying remarks, Claims 3-9 and 15, as amended, are believed to be patentable and in condition for allowance.

In the event that this paper is not timely filed, Applicant respectfully petitions for an appropriate extension of time. Please charge any fees for such an extension of time and any other fees which may be due with respect to this paper, to Deposit Account No. 01-2340.

Respectfully submitted,

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